

## INTRODUCTION TO THE DATABASE AND ITS USE

### *Enslaved Persons in Buncombe County, 1791 – 1868*

<https://www.obcgs.com/research-resources/enslaved-persons-in-buncombe-co-nc-1791-1868/>

This project came about from the Old Buncombe County Genealogical Society's mission to help individuals locate their ancestors in Buncombe County, particularly enslaved ancestors and freed people of color. Census records before 1870 did not include African Americans, making it tedious work to comb through a variety of records in search of their ancestors. Therefore, the genealogical society collaborated with the University of North Carolina at Asheville's History Department to create a searchable database for enslaved and freed people in Buncombe County from 1792 to 1868. Student intern, Lonnie Thomas, examined records available in the library as well as online sources to build this database.

These records include Court of Pleas & Quarter Sessions minutes, indenture bonds, slave deeds, cohabitation records, church minutes, newspaper articles, slave schedules, wills and estate records. Each entry is organized by the enslaved person's name (if available), age, sex, county where the record originates, parents, associations, source of information, type of record, and any important comments regarding the source or individual. In this database, "association" refers to any family or person connected to the enslaved or freed individual—this could be an enslaver or a guardian of some sort. Many names are unknown, but the records help identify a particular person in a specific place and time, which is the first step in genealogical work. As such, there are many duplicate names that could refer to the same person. In this project, research was not done to verify possible connections.

The records labeled "questionable" name individuals found in the handwritten Court minutes of 1840–1854. Their names are listed because they may or may not have been enslaved. There is little evidence to determine their status.

Some records in the database use abbreviations for formatting purposes. Court records and slave deeds include both "CS" (Court Session) and "DOE" (Date of Event). Some sources provided both, while others gave only one, which is reflected in the database. All other records simply include the date the record was created. Cohabitation records include the date the marriage was officially registered and recognized by the State in 1866. However, many individuals considered themselves married before the official registration date. The earlier reported marriage date is noted in the comments section.

All records include a source of information, represented by a number in two columns. The number in the first column, **Source of Information**, refers to the Source Entries document, indicating the list number of that source. The number in the second column, **Source Page #**, indicates the page number in that source where the information is located.

EXAMPLE: Database Entry#12, Fanny, Age 27, Female. **Source of Information-1**. On the Source Entries document, the Bill of Sale is found in item 1: Manning, Nancy, ed, Buncombe County, North Carolina Court Records: Court of Pleas & Quarter Sessions Minutes ...Vol. 1. **Source Page #: 120**. The transcribed Bill of Sale is found on page 120 of that book.

See the Source Entries document for information on requesting copies of the transcribed records or the location of the original document from Old Buncombe County Genealogical Society.

The Slave Deeds are located on the Register of Deeds website. It's organized as grantor, grantee, slave names, book, and page. To access the raw document, click on either the book or page hyperlink. It will take you to a separate page with an assortment of other raw documents. To access the document that you need, locate the enslaved name (if available) or enslaver and click on the image for that source. It will take you to the source.

<https://www.buncombenc.gov/543/Slave-Deeds>

#### **ABBREVIATIONS KEY**

**CS – COURT SESSION**

**DOE – DATE OF EVENT**

**DECD – DECEASED**

**FPC – FREE PERSON OF COLOR**

#### **Additional Resources for Enslaved Persons Research**

- [Federal Writers' Project: Slave Narrative Project, Vol. 11, North Carolina, Part 1, Adams-Hunter | Library of Congress](#)
- [Digital Library on American Slavery](#)
- [North Carolina's Digital Heritage · DigitalNC](#)
- FamilySearch, North Carolina County Records 1833-1970, Buncombe County, School to Slave Records. Slave Record folders begin at Image 207. These records include court cases. <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33SQ-G5HG-9VRM?wc=SNGS-GPD%3A202909201%2C202949401%26cc%3D1916185&cc=1916185&lang=en&i=0>